



GOVERNOR  
**KENNY C. GUINN**  
STATE OF NEVADA



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**Gov. guinn announces \$9 million in grants to  
nevada water districts**

CARSON CITY – Governor Kenny Guinn, representatives from the Nevada legislature, the Nevada Board for Financing Water Projects and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), presented \$9 million in grants to water districts in Clark, Humboldt, Pershing and Washoe Counties in a presentation on Friday, Jan. 28, in the Governor's office in the State Capitol.

"The State recognizes the need for water system capital improvement grants to provide safe drinking water and protect precious groundwater resources," Gov. Guinn said. "I am pleased to report that our state-funded program has awarded grants to water systems in 16 counties around the state. Many of the state's small water systems could not meet current drinking water standards without this program."

A grant for \$2.4 million was presented to the Lovelock Meadows Water District, located in Pershing County. The grant represents 60 percent of the estimated project cost for improvements to the water system to provide a safe and reliable supply of water. Additional grants included \$2 million to the Virgin Valley Water District in Clark County to construct an arsenic removal plant; \$956,478 to the Golconda General Improvement District in Humboldt County to bring the public water system into compliance with state regulations for drinking water; and \$4 million to the Washoe County Department of Water Resources to correct a nitrate contamination problem in Spanish Springs created by septic to sewer conversion.

"Through this program, the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has implemented improvements to water systems throughout the state," said Allen Biaggi, department director. NDEP Administrator Leo Drozdoff added, "Because this is a State of Nevada program, we have a much greater level of flexibility that allows us to work closely with individual grant recipients to meet their needs either through stand-alone funding or by providing funds to help leverage other local and federal loan resources."

State Senators Mike McGinness and Maurice Washington, and Assemblymen Tom Grady and John Marvel, were acknowledged for their instrumental support of past and current water projects. Their efforts include passage during the 2003 legislative session of an additional \$17 million to finance water projects around the state.

The water grant program was created by Assembly Bill 198 in the 1991 legislative session and authorized the creation of the Board for Financing Water Projects, a six-member board appointed by the Governor. The Board for Financing Water Projects administers the grant program through the Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Division of Environmental Protection. The program was funded through the sale of general obligation bonds and the amount was raised to \$90 million during the 2003 session.

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The program encompasses three types of projects: AB-198 established a program for capital improvements for drinking water systems to comply with state drinking water requirements; AB-237 was added to help finance efficient irrigation and water conservation projects; and SB-200 was added to retire septic systems in favor of a community sewer program where contaminants like nitrates may impact the quality of groundwater. This is a state program separate from the loan program funded through grants from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Board requests that all applicants first apply for a loan for the maximum possible amount, with water rates of at least 1.5 percent of the median household income of the customers served. The Board may grant the difference between the project cost and the loan amount. Through analysis by NDEP of water project needs, the Board has approved \$89 million for water projects in each county except Carson City.

For more information on the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the Board for Financing Water Projects, visit the Web site at <http://ndep.nv.gov/bwpc/finboard.htm>.

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